

PIT OF HORROR

SPECIAL LIMITED
COLLECTOR'S
PREVIEW EDITION
No. 1/2

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INSIDE:

VAMPIRE LOVERS!

**STEPHEN LAWS
INTERVIEW!**

LOTS OF PICS!

Vampire Portfolio No. 1



Ingrid gets her teeth into her role

INGRID PITT
The Queen of Horror
presents

PITT HORROR

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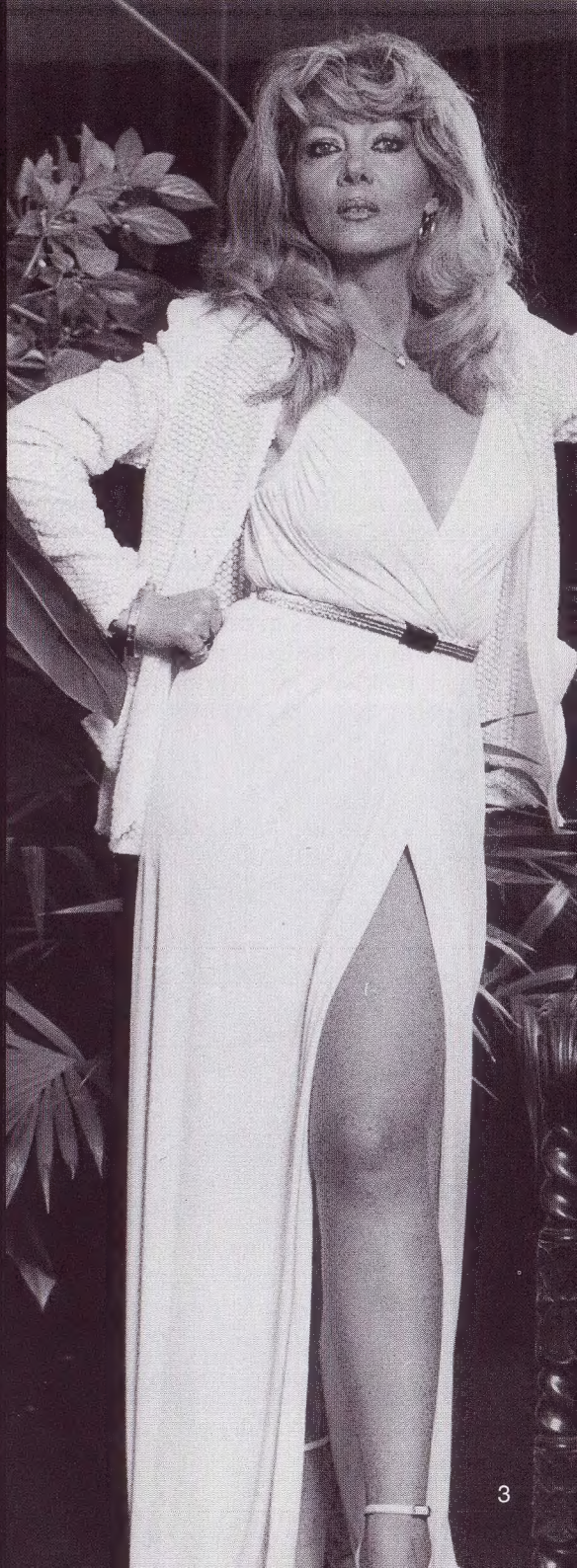
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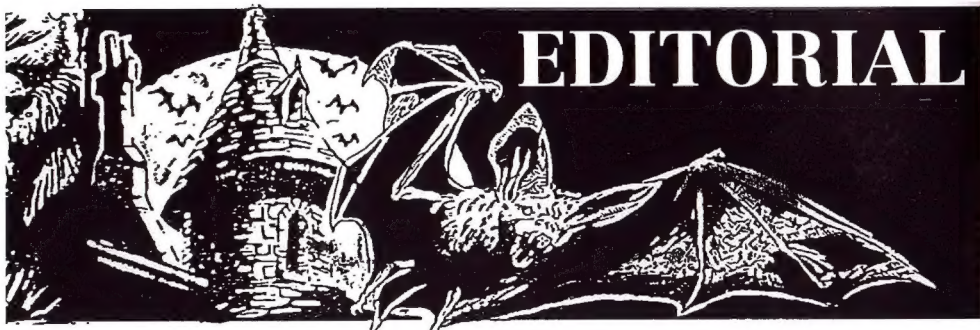
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It may have escaped your notice but I do appear quite a lot in this magazine. You may wonder why this is. You may be tempted to think that it is because I am a megalomaniac and, because I have had a magazine named after me, I've insisted that I appear on every page. The simple truth is - I am the megalomaniac who - having had a magazine named after me - insists that I appear on every page. In future issues you will have to put up with the likes of Veronica Carlson, Martine Beswicke or Caroline Munro. I know - you really want me - but what can I do?

Let me tell you something about this magazine. It's going to be different. Our aim is to write about things I like and hope that you share my views. From humourous asides to learned dissertations on the psychological, metaphysical and subjective import of the Horror genre we intend to get the very best contributors strutting their stuff. And then there's the crossword! Okay - so it's not everyone who wants to spend hours sucking the end of a biro and trying to think of a four letter word that means the mutual congress of two human beings with the intention of procreation (LOVE), but that's their loss.

My Transylvanian Diet is aimed at

singing taste-buds - not counting calories. It may not be haute cuisine but my recipes are bloody tasty. What we also want to do is get a lively dialogue going with the horror societies.

PITT OF HORROR is working up a presence

at the various Conventions and Marts that go on, not only in Great Britain but also in the United States. I try to get to as many as I can.

It is a real joy to actually meet the fans who come around to get a glimpse of the old bag they have seen on the box. It gives me a great fillip and I'd like to thank everyone who makes the effort. Some times I even get through an entire autograph signing session without having to resort to the Zimmer-frame or being featured on a '999' programme. The shows give me a great chance to get a reaction to what is going on.

We would like to hear from you to gauge your response to the magazine. If it is favourable enough we could soon publish it on a regular basis with more colour and a larger page size! Negotiations with sponsors are currently on the way for our various 'Pitt of Horror' projects. I will reveal all as soon as possible.

Well maybe not 'ALL' have long gone - sadly.

Well, that's about it for our "pilot" issue - but don't forget to write! My fangs may spend most of their time in a glass odd Steradent these days but I'm still capable of gumming you to death if you don't follow orders!

Until next time - breathe in more times than you breathe out, avoid stepping on cracks when there's an earthquake about and if you see a guy in knee britches, puritan collar and carrying a carpet bag with 'Van Helsing' piqued on it, say "She went thataway!"

Wipac Jones





by Marcus Hearne

HAMMER were looking for a new angle to
put bums on seats and keep the studio
blood pumping.
They found the answer on the Isle of Lesbos

THE VAMPIRE LOVERS went before the camera at Elstree Studios on January 19th 1970.

Hammer films had suggested Roy Ward Baker, who had previously done *THE ANNIVERSARY* and *QUATERMASS AND THE PIT* for them, as director. Hammer's choice proved more than acceptable to Harry Fine, Michael Styles (Producers) and Tudor Gates (the writer).

As usual Hammer had assembled a superb cast. Their old standby, Peter Cushing, played the pivotal role of General Spiedsdolf, Laura's father was played by newcomer Pippa Steel, and the other cast members included George Cole as Morton, Dawn Addams as The Countess, Douglas Wilmer as Baron Hartog, John Forbes Robertson as The Man in Black and Harvey Hall (who was to appear in every film in the trilogy) as Renton, the butler.

The remainder of the cast was a classic example of Hammer's uncanny knack for discovering excellent young talent. Jon Finch, later to find fame in Roman Polanski's *MACBETH* and Alfred Hitchcock's *FRENZY*, played Carl, the dashing young hero. Madeleine Smith, who had previously appeared in a small role in Hammer's *TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA* the previous year, was cast as Emma, the heroine.

As her governess Mme Perrodot, Kate O' Mara made her debut for Hammer before going on to *HORROR OF FRANKENSTEIN* as Alys and into a London stage production of *THE AVENGERS* as a villainess. Both Pippa Steel and Madeleine Smith, of course, went onto other things. Steel into *YOUNG WINSTON*, starring another Hammer discovery, Simon Ward: and Smith into, among other things, *LIVE AND LET DIE*, Roger Moore's first James Bond film.

But who would play the lead role of Carmilla? Sir James Carreras was on the lookout for someone new. As Harry Fine related: "Ingrid Pitt arrived in our office one day mysteriously almost like Carmilla arrived at Castle Karnstein. Although her middle European accent foreshadowed possible problems, she seemed a natural for the part. I was the casting director: casting was my primary concern."

And so, if anybody really 'discovered' Ingrid Pitt, it was Harry Fine. She had, of course, received considerable exposure in the Clint Eastwood/Richard Burton film *WHERE EAGLES DARE* in a secondary role, but *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* represented her first starring role in a truly 'international' production.





The storyline concocted by Fine, Style and Gates (with final screenplay credit going to Gates alone) followed Le Fanu's original more closely than other screen versions before or since.

Although Laura was the heroine of the book, however, *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* relegates her secondary status; here she is only the first victim of Carmilla, thereby allowing Hammer to toss in a few more voluptuous girls.

Although Gates screenplay has sometimes been accused of telling the same story twice - first Carmilla drains Laura dry, then does the same to Laura's friend - its actually constructed along the lines of *PSYCHO*. The audience decides in the opening sequence that Laura will be the heroine of the piece, only to be shocked when she dies in the first half hour of the film. Like the storyline of *PSYCHO*, the remainder of the film concentrates on new victims and their relative (in this case Cushing) searching for the fiend who killed his kin.

One feels that the explicit lesbian angle to *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* was what attracted AIP to the project in the first place. American International was always quick to cash in on a trend, and the success of lesbian-themed films

such as *THERESE AND ISABELLE* and *THE KILLING OF SISTER GEORGE* had not escaped their attention. With their expertise in horror films (combined with Hammer's), a combination of the two themes in one seemed a natural progression.

Harry Fine remembers the production as going along very smoothly. "Tudor's screenplay was a first class blueprint," he recalls. "Roy Ward Baker handled the cast very well and we had an efficient second unit to mop up the exteriors."

The exterior shots, some of the most atmospheric scenes in the film, were filmed in Hertfordshire, mainly at - of all places - Moor Park Golf Course, the scene of The Bob Hope Classics. The clubhouse was actually a mansion used by Henry VIII's chief minister and that was used as the manor house in the film.

Harry Robertson had previous associations both with Hammer and the AIP. He had scored the theme music for Hammer's ill-fated television show *JOURNEY TO THE UNKNOWN* in 1968 and a year later, had scored AIP's *THE OBLONG BOX* which starred Christopher Lee, Vincent Price and Hilary Dwyer.



*Above: a publicity shot of the female cast members, Ingrid Pitt, Madeline Smith, Kate O'Mara, Pippa Steel and Kirsten Betts.
Opposite top: The Lesbian Scene with Madeline Smith.*



He was suggested to *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* team by a long associate, Frank Godwin (who later would produce *DEMONS OF THE MIND*). "Encouraged by Godwin's recommendation," Fine says, "We engaged him for *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*. We were very pleased with that score and we used him for the next two Carmilla films, and for our (Fatale's) production of *FRIGHT*." Fine feels that the cast and crew realised during filming that they might have something special on their hands. The first unit had a six week shooting schedule, plus some exteriors for the second unit. True to Hammer's form, it came in at (or perhaps even slightly under) \$400,000 budget.

THE VAMPIRE LOVERS was something of an experiment on Hammer's part. Although the sex in their vampire films had been slowly evolving, it still seemed something of a leap to make a more or less traditional vampire story with the added touches of bared breasts and lesbian kisses. Would it be a hit?

Hammer had nothing to fear. *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* was a smash. It made Ingrid Pitt a star and became an enduring classic that's still shown regularly in England, in the U.S. and throughout the world.

AIP helped sell in this country with their usual crass advertising.

The lurid poster screamed: "A whisper of warm desire becomes a Shriek of Chilling Terror in the embrace of the... Blood Nymphs!" A sidebar warned "CAUTION! Not for the mentally immature!" It obviously wasn't for the person who designed the silly poster, in that event. Strangely enough, no mention of lesbianism was mentioned in the advertising, although the R rating was the very first for a horror film. Incredibly enough, *DRACULA HAS RISEN FROM THE GRAVE* had been rated G, in spite of its gore and sexual suggestions. The prevailing attitude at the time was that horror films were only for the kids - give them an R and no-one would go to see them.

That attitude was proved to be dead wrong by *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*. The new approach to the vampire myth was not ignored by Arthur Knight and Hollis Alpert, who wrote in *Playboy's Sex in Cinema 2*; The English studios were in such deep trouble in 1971 that virtually any picture of interest - *THE MUSIC LOVERS*, *GET CARTER*, *THE DEVILS* - was made for, and pre-paid by, an American company. One of the kinkier of these, produced by Hammer Films for fun-loving American-International, was the *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*, a rather skillful interlacing of sex and horror.

Instead of the familiar Lugosi-style vampire, we see the living dead represented by curvaceous Ingrid Pitt, a sultry brunette fatally drawn to creatures of her own sex (though the fatality is unflinchingly theirs).

Miss Pitt, who recurs in the film as Carmilla and Marcilla, also departs from the vampire norm by nipping her victims not on the neck but on the breast, which adds not only a touch of lesbianism but also a frisson of voyeurism whenever the doctor must examine a shapely female corpse for the telltale marks. And where a stake through the heart was formerly good enough to despatch the doughtiest vampire, now nothing less than decapitation suffices."

Hammer was once again courting some long-overdue controversy!

But how does *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* stand up today as a film? Actually the highly touted lesbian scenes seem pretty tame by today's standards (and by over imitation). although the decapitation scenes surprisingly pared somewhat by AIP - are still very effective. It's difficult to understand the stir the film caused in 1970/71. Compared to latter-day horror films, most of which are replete with sex and violence, *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* is extremely tasteful. Far from detracting from its status as a classic though the film's restraint can only add to it's

reputation. Its languorous pacing perfectly captures the mood of Le Fanu's story. The elegant sets by Scott MacGregor, combined with Moray Grant's shadowy suggestive photography, combine to create a haunting visual treat. In many respects *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* resembles *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE*. Both films stress atmosphere over violent action. The vampires behave similarly in both films too: unlike Christopher Lee's Dracula, Ingrid Pitt is not about to disintegrate into dust at the rising of the sun, although she prefers to sit in the warm sunshine as Madeline Smith does. When Pippa Steel dies, however it is Pitt who commands Cushing: "Open the curtains. It is daylight. He is dead." That's an interesting reversal of *HORROR OF DRACULA*'s final scene. Like the undead in *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE*, the Karnsteins can move about by daylight and don't necessarily sleep in coffins every day. In fact, they only rest when satiated with the blood of their victims, just as Noel Willman's Dr. Ravana did in *KISS OF THE VAMPIRE*.

If vampirism was treated as a social disease in that film, it seems even more of a physical disease in *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*. The female victim gradually wastes away, like leukemia victims, until the end.



Roy Ward Baker, who must be one of the most underrated directors of all time, did a superb job with *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS*. It was his first adventure into vampire terrain and he pulled it off beautifully. The camera set-ups were almost traditional in their elegance and the whole pre-credit sequence is one of the most atmospheric and visually stunning scenes ever done by Hammer.

The acting in *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* is a bit uneven, due mainly to an excess of post-production dubbing. Cushing is, as always, excellent, as are Douglas Wilmer, George Cole, Kate O'Mara and Pippa Steel. Jon Finch registers strongly as the Stewart Car and although Madeline Smith was a pretty inexperienced actress at the time, she manages to make her innocence work for her.

There can be no doubt that Ingrid Pitt was the perfect Carmilla. Harry Fine knew exactly what he was doing when he cast her. Her indefinable accent and husky voice contribute to the feeling of decadent lassitude that pervades every frame of the film. She also has some wonderful lines: after sating her thirst on a victim, she sits down to dinner unenthusiastically. With everyone else at the table staring at her, she looks up and says

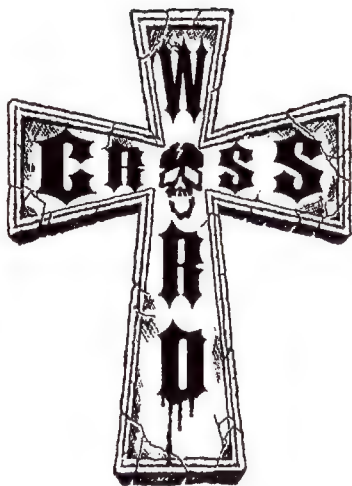
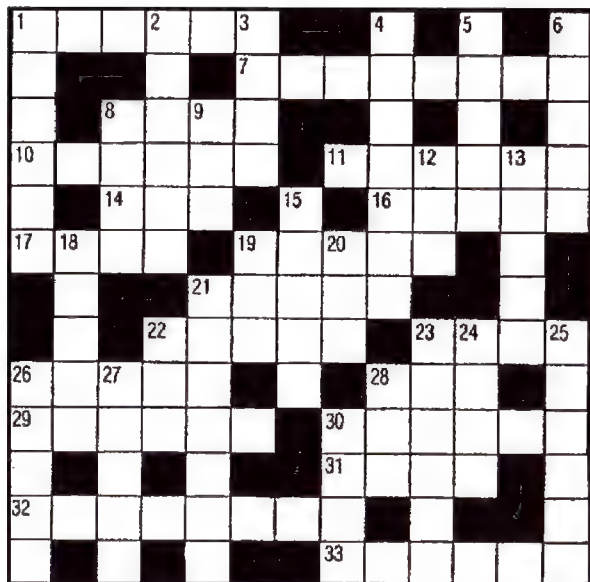
simply "I'm not hungry," with an offhanded delivery that gets the point across very subtly. Another nice touch is when Renton offers her wine. "Red or white, Madame?" he asks her. "Red" she replies. But of course.

One of the most effective moments is just after she's murdered Kate O'Mara by draining all of her blood. Jon Finch runs into the room, sword in hand and when she looks up and sees him, she wipes the blood off her mouth as though she were a child who'd just been caught raiding the cookie jar. It's one of those touches that's so typically Hammer: much imitated, but never equalled.

Pitt's performance is multi-faceted. At times, she seems only to be an innocent, frightened young woman, as in the funeral scene when she implores Madeline Smith to "hold me, please hold me" At other times, such as when she's attacking Ferdy Mayne, she's more like a blood-thirsty animal.

Ingrid Pitt regards *THE VAMPIRE LOVERS* as her best horror film, and most filmgoers and critics would agree. It's also one of Hammer's very best horror films and its reputation only increases with the passage of time.






Across

1. Feather or knuckle it cleans it up. (6)
7. A reason for the best bib and tucker? (8)
8. 51 foot rise? (4)
10. Eastern eleven for him and his when they've gone. (6)
11. "..... the seaside" (6)
14. Even knights are. (3)
16. F.A. or R.I.P. the result's the same (5)
17. Sounds coloured but black (4)
19. 'It's only just.....' (5)
21. She can be super or just plastic. (5)
22. It comes out at night for a bite. (5)
23. Skeleton on board? (4)
26. Wet to wear? (5)
28. Not me. (3)
29. The fox amongst the chicken here? (6)
30. Address unknown. (6)
31. Just the bloke to take a breath away. (4)
32. A sweet vehicle for the Gibsons? (8)
33. Secreted a car ring in it and it didn't turn out too well. (6)

Down

1. Garlic helps to against vampires (6)
2. Some wish Lily did in the field (6)
3. If I am out of the fracas he does it in hell. (4)
4. Belt, braces, Garlic and Holy Water. (7)
5. Demo at the Devil's place? (3,2)
6. I bet she won't go on the cake (5)
8. Bitter refreshment after the gallows? (4)
9. Mummy got stuck into this. (3)
12. It seems like a good thing at the time. (3)
13. He made it hot for the sinner. (5)
15. Sounds there should be more for the last battle. (5)
18. Gold I received? (5)
19. Nice one - shame about the dial. (3)
20. Baby, can't even ride half a horse. (3)
21. A journalists revenge? (7)
22. Arthur feels tired in the east, initially. (3)
23. That moment over the Andes? (6)
24. He sounds like he's flashing again. (4)
25. Is this how he lost his butt? (6)
26. Does the spawn of the devil do this in a pond? (5)
27. Costly to lose this (5)
28. Something you long for in Japan. (3)
30. Of honour or the last cord? (4)

Just to be really evil..... we won't give you the answers until the next issue!
(If there is one! heh! heh! heh!)



THE Tranny/Vanion DIET

VAMPIRE'S BROTH

(recipe for a coven of 4!)

The food I cook tends to be heavy on spices and rigid with garlic. Don't believe all that guff about vampires and garlic. That was put out by a particularly nasty little lycanthrophobe with piles that a gibbon would envy. And the grub has got to be plain - and plentiful.

One of the problems is finding the right ingredients. O.K. so virgins blood is rare these days. Did it deter the residents of Summer Isle?

Not on your Nosferatu. They just enticed the last virgin of the western world and served him up *flambe'd* to Christopher Lee. Me - I would have preferred a prime Angus steak but I was only there to display the bod. With Virgins Blood a no-no what do we have that can at least bring a gleam to the eye and kick-start the pampered taste-buds.

How about Borscht?

How about the economy in Papua, New Guinea for that matter but let's not confuse the issue. Borscht (or *Virgin Vampire Broth* if you want to be romantic) is one of the great soups of Eastern Europe.

The Ingredients

6 uncooked beetroot (about 1kg) washed & peeled.

(They make a lovely, bloody mess on your hands and anything else in the kitchen they come in contact with) 4 medium sized onions, skinned and chopped (Vlad Tapes style)

1 tin of concentrated onion soup. (and if you're not concentrating you're liable to cut your hand on the tin. Then you might regret who's coming to dinner).

2 litres seasoned beefstock
butter

3 lemons

seasoning (salt & pepper)

soured cream (I always look at it before I put my face on in the morning - that you would sour anything)
chives (optional)

The beetroot must be raw when it's committed to the pot. Cooking time can be reduced if beets are grated. Melt butter in saucepan and stir-fry chopped onions. Add beefstock and peeled beetroot and cook until tender (approx 45 mins). Remove, cut up and chop beetroot finely, (put in grater and mash if creamy texture is desired. Another opportunity to add real blood to the recipe. Those beetroots are slippery little sods). Return mixture to stock (now red with beetroot juice and grated finger) and add tin of onion soup. Beat all the time with whisk, (a chance to wear that new Dominatrix rubber gear your Igor bought you for Christmas) reheat Broth gently, slowly (so get the rubber gear off) add lemon juice, salt & pepper to taste (or if you want authenticity invite a Russian round and strain the mixture through his socks). Serve chilled or hot with three or four tablespoons of soured cream and chopped chives. If this doesn't get you into the Federated Association of Dubious Dentures - nothing will.



Vampire Portfolio No.



Max Schreck in NOSFERATU

Vampire Portfolio No. 3



Bela Lugosi as DRACULA



interviewed by Ingrid

What's your background, Stephen?

I was born in Newcastle upon Tyne in 1952, where I still live with my wife Melanie and our two children, Eve (4) and Jonathan (1). After twenty years working in local government as a committee administrator, I became a full-time novelist in 1993, my first 'horror' novel having been published in 1985. Notwithstanding my local government career, I've been a number of other things in my time: a parachutist with a fear of heights, an accounts clerk who can't add up, a skindiver with claustrophobia and asthma, an actor with stage fright, pianist with a slightly wobbly left hand whose compositions have been given the full symphonic treatment on pre-Civil War Yugoslav television and a pseudonymous cartoonist in a magazine whose identity, if known, could lead to charges of libel.

What started you on your career as writer?

I began to write at a very early age, probably about seven or eight years old. I suffered very badly with asthma and spent most of the Winter months in bed. So I suppose I 'escaped' by reading and writing stories a great deal, when most of my peers were out on the football pitch. The urge to create stories never left me after that, and I

kept on scribbling on various bits and pieces of paper over the years. But I began to take it more seriously in the late seventies, when I attempted to write for radio and television. After a major disappointment with the BBC, when one of my plays was not produced on 'grounds of cost' (i.e. the outside location work was too expensive), I decided to concentrate instead on something close to my heart: supernatural horror thrillers. My first short stories in the genre in the early 1980's won a number of awards, leading me to attempt my first novel *GHOST TRAIN* which was published in 1985 and gained a degree of notoriety when posters of the novel, bearing the logo 'A journey into innermost terror' were removed by British Rail from each of their mainline stations due to fears that 'passengers might confuse this with our own advertising and become alarmed'. But in terms of what 'started' me as a creator of 'horror' stories, I believe this goes back to my father. When I was very young, he used to give me detailed re-tellings of the horror movies he'd seen at the local cinema on the previous night, and the scary television shows that I was too young to stay up and watch. He was a superb storyteller, and really got me hooked.

Later, at school, I used to sneak into the cinemas under-age to see the latest Hammer films, for example, and then end up telling the stories of the movies in just the same way in the schoolyard. Pretty soon, I'd have a crowd of twenty or thirty kids listening to me telling the horror-movie story. Sometimes, the bell would ring for us to go back in for classes, and no-one would notice! I think that's when I was bitten by the story telling bug. That special 'buzz' of being able to hold a crowd enthralled with my storytelling was really influential. Sometimes, if the movie was a real let-down or hadn't been scary at all, I'd 'jazz it up' a little with embellishments of my own. So, if not for my father - maybe I would be doing something very different today. I've had a great love for the genre ever since I was about seven or eight years old. (Peter Cushing remains my Number One hero).

Ingrid Pitt is also directly responsible for a severe dressing-down I received from the boss of my first local government job. I was supposed to be at college one afternoon, attending one of the classes for the public administration courses I'd been enrolled on. But I got pissed off with it and sneaked away to see "The Vampire Lovers" instead. An 'absence without permission' card was sent to work, and I was on the carpet for it. But it was worth it, Ingrid.

Your work has a very 'cinematic' quality. Bearing in mind what you've just said, were you heavily influenced in your writing by the horror movies you saw when you were younger?

I don't think there's any doubt about it. My second novel, *SPECTRE* was set in and around a real life flea-pit cinema that I used to frequent: The Imperial on Byker Bank in Newcastle.

The novel contains a number of homages to the movies which influenced me, and was written in a very 'linear' way; in

other words, written in very much the way that you'd expect a movie to unfold (together with various 'flashback' techniques). Let's think of an example... I saw two movies as a youngster which put me off ventriloquist's dolls for life: *Dead of Night* [1945] and *Devil Doll* [1964]. Both featured dummies that could move around on their own, and had unpleasant anti-social habits. I decided to take it a step further in *SPECTRE* by creating the scariest, most dangerous doll of all time. However, books aren't films and vice versa. They're both completely different forms; so whereas it's true to say that the horror movies I saw as a youngster certainly influenced me, I'm not writing 'movies-books' as such.

Having given a 'tip of the hat' in *SPECTRE* to the horror movies I loved, I took this a great deal further with my latest novel *DAEMONIC* which is a supernatural/horror/thriller fantasy set very much in the world of the B-Movie horror film. I had a great deal of fun creating a monstrous villain who's a cross between Citizen Kane, Howard Hughes and Roger Corman. Without giving too much of the plot away, this character (Jack Draegerman) is a fabulously rich recluse who once made a series of infamous horror movies back in the Seventies. He invites a number of people to the huge Gothic tower which he inhabits in the middle of the city. Once there, they're trapped inside and hunted by Draegermans own B-Movie monsters come to life. You'll have to read the book to understand the whys and wherefores, but I had the chance there to draw on the whole horror movie genre and drop a few in-jokes on the way.

So what can we expect from Stephen Laws in the future?

As I mentioned, in my last novel *DAEMONIC* was published by Hodder & Stoughton in hardback and is now in paperback. My latest novel for the same publisher, which is entitled *SOMEWHERE SOUTH OF MIDNIGHT* is out in hardback.

I'm currently working on a new novel but I have to keep the title under wraps for the moment. I'm currently involved with Tim Healy's production company, Chariot, who are trying to find financing to make movie versions of my horror-thriller, police procedural novel DARKFALL and my vampire novel GIDEON (which would be a perfect vehicle for Timothy Dalton).

What 'fires' you to work in the horror genre?
My over-riding passion in the horror genre is seeing how 'ordinary' people react in extraordinary circumstances. I like writing about 'ordinary' people who suddenly turn a corner in their lives and - wham! - find themselves in the Twilight Zone. I also enjoy breaking the rules. For instance in the WYRM I wanted to create a completely new monster that has its own modus operandi, its own rules. Something that had never been seen before. Here in the North East of England, we have a very specific legend about the 'Lampton Worm', which wasn't a worm but was in fact dragon-like. I hi-jacked the legend and used it to create that new monster. In Old English 'wyrm' means 'evil spirit' and has nothing to do with serpents or snakes at all. As to GIDEON, I'd always wanted to write a vampire novel. But I also wanted to experiment with it. In the process I took everything that we know or have read about vampires - and threw it out. So, in my novel Gideon can't be stopped with a stake through the heart, he doesn't fear the cross or daylight or garlic or running water. He can't transform into an animal, he can't fly, he doesn't have pointed teeth - and he doesn't drink blood. How's that for a new vampire? I'm pleased to say that my new 'take' on the legend must have worked because the book has been a runaway success, and recently won Best Vampire Novel Award from the Count Dracula Society of England.

If you'll pardon the cliché, where do you get your ideas from?

This is always the most difficult question to answer. I tend to find that story telling is a little like making wine. One idea may hit me and I put it into the 'pot' in the back of my mind, then something else, and something else - all unrelated but fascinating 'what if?' ideas. After a few months, I give that pot a shake and see what's fermenting. More often than not, I begin to see that all of these ideas are related after all and that they've coalesced to form the beginnings of a story. So there's never just one idea for a story, it's usually an inter-related series of ideas that spin around in the back of my mind.

Who are your favourite writers?

Richard Matheson, Nigel Kneale and (of course) Stephen King.

Your favourite books and films?

The list could go on and on. I take it we're still talking about horror? (There is so much other stuff non-horror related that I love). If so, then I'd cite Richard Matheson's novel 'I Am Legend' as being one of my favourites. King's 'Salem's Lot'. The ghost stories of M.R. James, Peter Straub's 'Ghost Story' was a huge influence on me. Films - 'The Haunting', 'Night of the Demon', 'Them!', Hammer's 'Dracula'. Believe me, my list could go on and on.

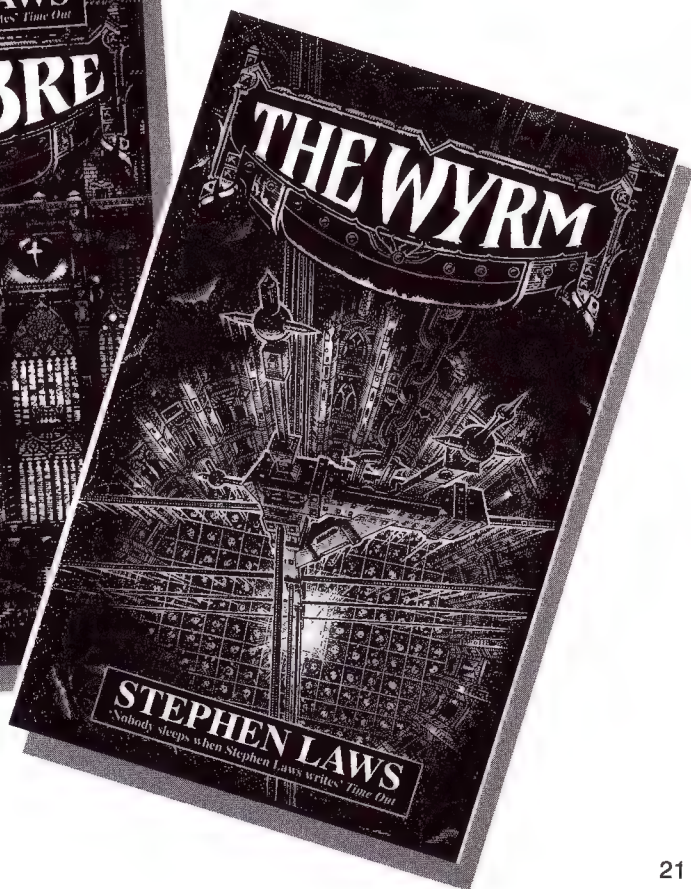
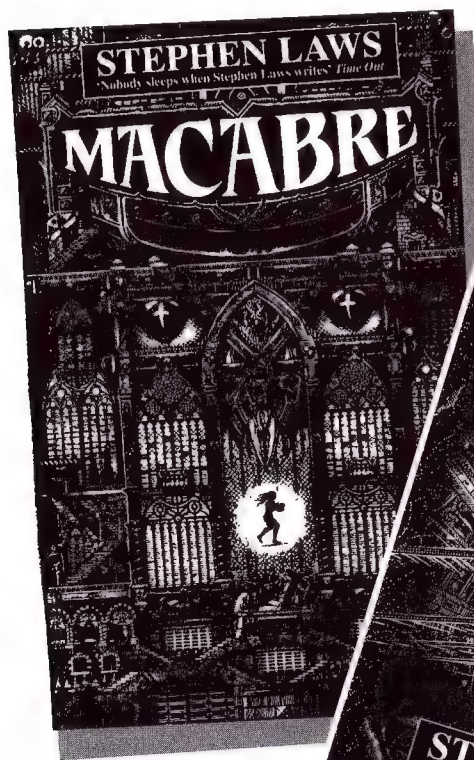
Does anything frighten you in the genre?

I find myself less and less horrified by books and movies as time goes by. Maybe I'm getting used to it all! Being a novelist, you become aware of the creative 'tricks of the trade' as you're reading a book or watching a movie, so it takes something really special to take you by surprise. I tend to find myself more 'impressed' by the story telling technique of a good horror novel or movie these days than 'horrified'.

Why have you stayed in the horror genre?

Because the genre is so wide. Just as westerns are not just about ten gallon hats and bows and arrows, the horror genre is not just about blood and guts and gore - or at least, in my view it shouldn't be just about that. There's such a wide range of stories that can be told in this spectrum. I love it because it is dangerous fiction; it presents situations that are not only dangerous physically and literally, but also psychologically, intellectually and even spiritually. Within that range you can tell stories of alienation, confrontation, subversion and even tales of redemption, bravery and rebirth. As it's the genre that deals with the

things that frighten us the most as a race, then the genre is wide open. I've always been attracted to the horror field, strangely enough, because of the amazingly 'positive' charge that it can give when ordinary people face up to terrible threats by drawing on reserves of strength they never knew they possessed. Above all, of course, the horror genre is - dangerous! And people like to play with fire sometimes. The difference in reading a horror novel is that you may well have a good scare, but your fingers won't literally be burned. For the time that you're turning the pages, you're in dangerous territory.





All of us at the 'Pitt of Horror' were pleased to see the beautiful range of full colour postcards featuring horror film posters that have been produced by the **London Postcard Co.**

We have reproduced a few samples from their wide range on our colour-packed centre pages just to make your mouth water!

We believe the cards sell at approx 50p each but strongly suggest that you send them a stamped, self addressed envelope along with a request for details of all cards available - prices - postage costs etc.

At the time of printing this magazine, they are also offering a brilliant 1998 Calendar celebrating 40 years of Hammer films. The Calendar measure 12" x 12" (30 x 30 cm). has 24 internal pages, a laminated cover, is in full colour and comes shrink-wrapped with a sturdy card stiffener. The 'Hammer Horror official licensed 1998 Calendar' costs £9.99 plus £2 p&p

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DRACULA

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CHARLES TINGWELL THORLEY WALTERS

WALTER BROWN PHILIP LATHAM Screenplay by JOHN GARDNER From the novel by J. M. COLE
Directed by PETER COOPER Produced by JAMES HANCOCK
TOLSON & CO. "HAMMER" Robert Group LIMITED

DRINK A PINT OF BLOOD A DAY

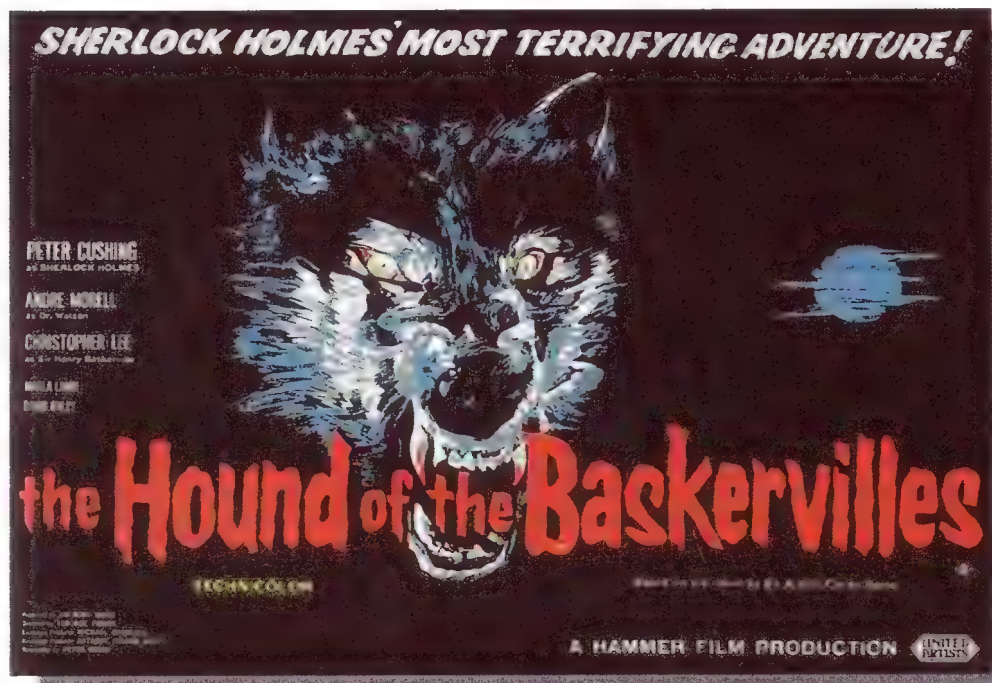
Warner Bros. presents A Hammer Film Production

TASTE THE BLOOD OF DRACULA

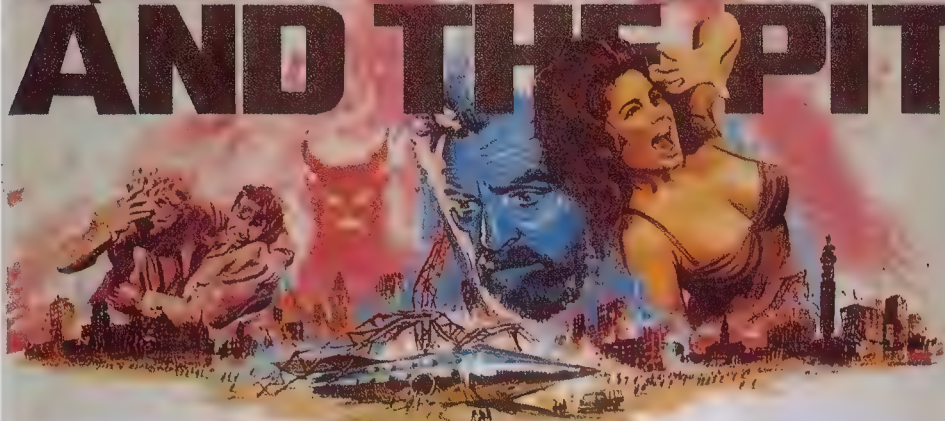


CHRISTOPHER LEE

Screenplay by JOHN ELDEN Produced by ANITA YOUNG
Directed by PETER SASDY Released through WARNER PATHE

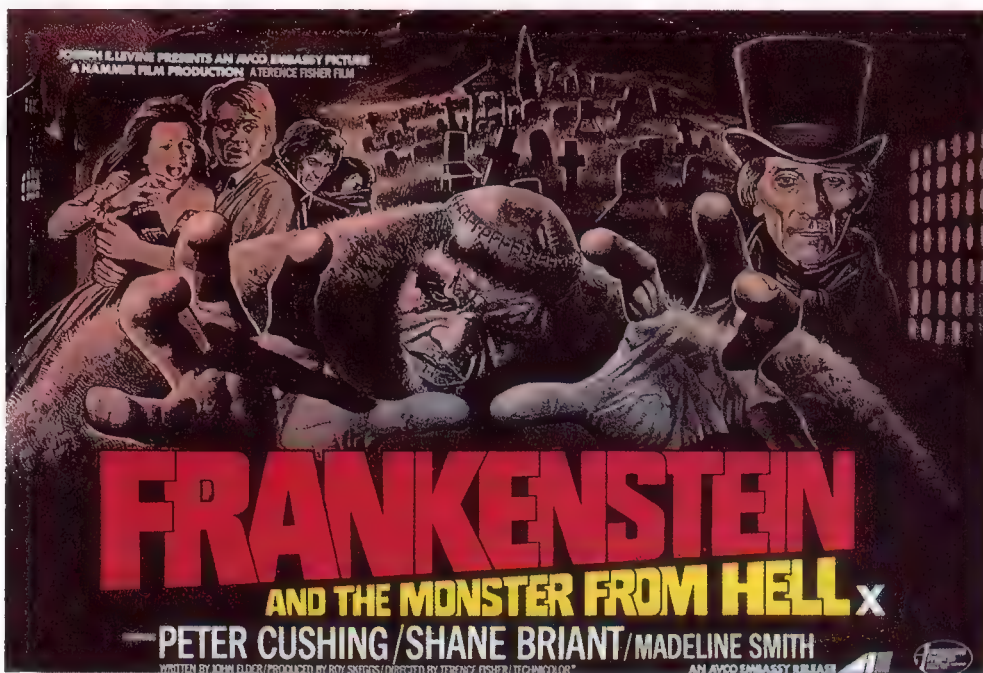


QUATERMASS AND THE PIT



JAMES DONALD · ANDREW KEIR · BARBARA SHELLEY · JULIAN GLOVER
QUATERMASS AND THE PIT

Original Story and Screenplay by NICK AMATE. Produced by ANTHONY MASON. Directed by ROY WARD BAY. Hammer Film Productions Ltd. London.



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PETER CUSHING / SHANE BRIANT / MADELINE SMITH

WRITTEN BY FREDERICK BRON. PRODUCED BY ROY WARD BAY. DIRECTED BY ROY WARD BAY. HAMMER FILM PRODUCTIONS LTD. LONDON.

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BY INGRID PIT ILLUSTRATED BY ALAN LENTON

Roger de Palfrey coughed and spat with precision onto the flaming end of log in the huge, smoke grimed hearth. Briefly he thought of going back to his favourite bolt-hole among the remnants of what had been a well stocked cellar. The soporific effect of breathing near pure wood smoke robbed him of the will to do anything but sit and reflect on better times. He pulled the smelly blanket of raddled, half cured furs closer and tried to find some comfort on the hard wooden bench for his flabby buttocks. "It's not fair" he told himself and nodded sagely. The smoking fire cast sluggish shadows on the damp stone walls and highlighted the drab, rotting tapestries. Twenty years had passed since the de Palfrey name had meant anything. In all that time the only interruption in his slide down the greasy bannister to obscurity was his marriage to Essodena. And what a catastrophe that had been. Essodena was a shrew that could give master classes to Kate. But a well connected shrew. And her connections were the problem. He couldn't abandon her without bringing her father, the powerful Duc de Aubenge down on him like the eighth plague of Egypt. Essodena's temper had not improved since finding herself the mistress of a comfortless ruin and a vicious drunken husband. Every once in a while de Palfrey would rise above the haze of alcoholic fumes, take a look at his surroundings and swear to do something about it.

The furthest his determination led was to the house of the local pawn broker, Ingo Lombard. Lombard's usual attitude was such that de Palfrey would return home to ward off the incipient frostbite with a few bottles of the more toxic remains in his cellar. This time his reception at the Lombard villa was different. The old usurer loaned him a little gold and asked him to stay to dinner.

Later that evening Lombard produced his daughter, Lubina. She was a knockout and even Palfrey, through his alcoholic astigmatism, found himself smitten.

When his attempt to claim an impromptu droit de seigneur resulted in a couple of Lombard's more energetic retainers sitting on his chest, the old man told him that his beautiful daughter Lubina was available for marriage - and nothing else. De Palfrey just managed to stop himself giving a long-winded and graphic account of his marital status. He needed time to think.

Essodena was the problem, of course. Her and her rotten family. Without her compliance it would be impossible to marry into the Lombard coffers. And have his way with the lovely Lubina. Any move that Essodena didn't like would result in a visit from a squad of marriage guidance counsellors from her father - and de Palfrey knew from past experience that could be very, very painful.

He was just drifting away in a smoke-drugged sleep when he heard the door open.

PALFREY'S BANE



It was one of the two remaining servants. "There's someone to see you" the man said with no attempt at civility. Roger felt fear constrict his lungs. The only people who ever came to the castle were usually out for his blood. So far he had managed to keep his eight alcohol fortified pints untapped but he was under no illusions about how easily they could be decanted.

"Who is it?" he asked, shrinking back into the corner of the fireplace and pulling his blanket high around his ears.

"A party from the Duc de Aubenge" The manservant informed him maliciously. The information jerked him out of his smelly nest of furs. With an effort he pulled himself together. He tried ineffectually to do something about his clothing but they hadn't been off his body for months and were nailed in place by sweat and gave off a rancid, human smell made piquant by stale wine.

The man waiting for him was impressive. Above average height with a silk chasuble over his gleaming modern armour.

De Palfrey surmounted his innervating feeling of inferiority by assuring himself that is was all a bit *gauche* and *nouveau riche*. The soldier introduced himself.

"Chevalier Marcel Beavoir" He made no pretence of the way he felt about de Palfrey.

"His Grace the Duc de Aubenge has sent me to escort the Lady Essodena to his place for the Michaelmas Festivities." He said curtly.

De Palfrey was annoyed by his manner but knew better than to provoke a confrontation.

Besides, although he wasn't at all fond of his father-in-law the old nobleman kept a good table and an even better cellar. Perhaps, if he played the courtly knight, he could wangle an invitation. Essodena sank that aspiration without a trace. She couldn't wait to get away and made it very plain that Count de Palfrey was not one of those whom the *noblesse* felt obliged to oblige.

All evening de Palfrey skulked in the cellar. The more he drank the more determined he became to solve his problem. Somehow he had to rid himself of the dead-weight of his shrewish wife so he could sample the delights on offer in the Lombard household. Unbidden his thoughts settled on murder. It wasn't a new idea. Many a pleasantly alcoholic dream had been enhanced by the imagined feel of his wife's scrawny neck between his hands. After all the Duc had sent a picked escort for her. How could the powerless Roger de Palfrey be blamed if they all mysteriously disappeared?

The four man escort had settled in the kitchen. The Captain was a bigger problem. But - if he could just lure him down to the dungeon he could... The more he thought about it the more feasible it became. He calmed his nerves by thinking about the luscious Lubina and the sacks of gold their espousal would bring. But now it was time to act. Essodena's escort was asleep, sprawled around the dying fire in a wine drugged stupor.

De Palfrey felt his resolve weaken. He hefted the heavy axe in his hand and tried to decide who should first feel the cut of the rusty blade.

The choice was taken from him. With a snort the man nearest him opened his eyes. Panic hit de Palfrey. As the guard opened his mouth to warn the others de Palfrey swung the axe. More by luck than judgement the blade hit the waking man in the neck and his head jumped away from his body as if spring-loaded.

The sight was so terrible that de Palfrey lost all control. Suddenly he found himself leaning against the door-post vomiting over his feet. Around him was the evidence of his frenzy - the hacked pieces and congealing blood of the slaughtered escort. A terror seized de Palfrey as he contemplated his handiwork. He was committed now!

De Palfrey took a rush torch and headed for the west wing where the Captain was quartered. In the guttering light he noticed the state of his clothes. Blood soaked him from head to toe. What better camouflage? Out side the Captain's room he extinguished the torch, burst open the door and sank to his knees with a pitiable cry. With a martial oath the Captain leaped from the bed, sword in hand and grabbed the front of de Palfrey's blood stained tunic.

"What is it man? What's happened?" he demanded.

With a palsied finger de Palfrey pointed vaguely at the floor. The Captain dragged him out onto the landing.

"Show me" he said shortly, a man of action and few words.

As they entered the dungeon the Captain became suspicious. For the first time it occurred to him that his escort were not doing their duty. He slammed de Palfrey against the wall.

"What is all this? Tell me what's happened right now or I slit your throat" he grated out, his face so close that their noses clashed. De Palfrey screamed and looked with fear crazed eyes over the Captain's shoulder.

The act was so good that the Captain dropped de Palfrey and swung around to

meet his attacker. Blindly de Palfrey lowered his head and butted the bewildered man in the back. The Captains foot hit the rotting boards of the seige well and he felt them give beneath him. His battle-honed reactions almost saved him. He threw himself sideways and managed to cling onto a rusty hinge on the side of the well.

"Help me!" he ordered de Palfrey.

The Count walked slowly to the well side and looked down at the struggling man with satisfaction. Without a word he stamped on his fingers and watched with interest as his victim plummeted into the icy water fifty feet below. Now for the best bit. De Palfrey didn't waste time.

In the dungeon de Palfrey had already positioned a heavy chair. He enjoyed his wife's screams and entreaties as he dragged her roughly down the steep, abrasive steps into the dungeon. With a few deft movements he tied her to the chair and slapped her viciously across the face to stop her screams. He felt great. Omnipotent!

"I'm going to leave you for a little while, my dear" he said smugly. "I have a few chores to do first and then it will be just the two of us".

It took de Palfrey less than an hour to dispose of the escorts bodies down the siege well. The evidence of his crime was washed away with half a dozen buckets of water. Now for Essodena.

In the early dawn he stood back and admired his handiwork. It wasn't likely to get him a contract to build summer palaces but it was good enough for his purposes. De palfrey stood with his ear to the wall and was a little disappointed that he could not hear the screams of his dear wife. Well, nothing was ever perfect. To excited to sleep he spent the day nervously rehearsing what he would say when eventually his father-in-law turned up to see what had happened to his daughter. By then, of course he would be married to the delightful Lubina and a man of substance.

He would soon send the old man packing.

In the early evening he changed into the best suit of clothes he could find and went courting. He was in for a surprise. Instead of welcoming his marriage offer with open arms Lombard demanded that he paid back the money he had loaned him and was now due - with interest. And Lubina? She almost burst a blood vessel laughing at his presumption. The demolition of his dreams was more than he could bare. Whimpering with self pity he ran out into the night and didn't stop until he was safely hidden under the pile of rotting furs on his damp straw palliase. After all he had suffered. All the pain. The anguish. The fear. His poor wife. All for nothing. He was mad to have ever even thought of marrying the low-born Lubina. No class. Even her father's money couldn't buy her that. He'd never wanted to marry her anyway. A night or two of fun then he would be off. His maudlin thoughts gradually stroked him to sleep - to be awakened by a scream so terrible that his hair literally stood on end. Sweat poured off him as he huddled beneath the covers, every nerve stretched to hear the dreadful sound repeated. Nothing.

He settled down again, letting the feeling of righteous martyrdom sing a justifying lullaby. A soon as Morpheus claimed him the screams wrenched him back to the land of the tortured. Night after night the same thing happened. He closed his eyes and started to drift off and the demonic scream and shrieks of his wife jerked him awake. Awake the castle was as silent as the grave. It didn't matter how hard he listened at the stone veil that his his wife he could hear nothing. The lack of sleep and his obsession with rushing around listening at walls convinced his remaining servants to pick up what ever was worth carrying and leave for parts foreign. De Palfrey didn't their departure. A new element had now been added to the nocturnal screaming. Ecclesiastic chanting. And it came from the dungeon!

De Palfrey kept out of the castle as much as he could but it was winter and he wasn't the hardest nobleman who had ever walled up a fractious wife. It was two months since he thought he had found the solution to his problems. Hysterically he screamed into the night for her to let him sleep. A man possessed, he leapt down the dungeon steps, crying, cursing, pleading. The chanting grew louder and he became aware, of a white, ghostly light flickering below him. It was strange enough to have a sobering effect on his over-heated brain. More cautiously he edged up to the crumbling door of the dungeon and snatched a look inside. What he was blasted him back against the slimy walls. Huddled around the brickwork which hid his dreadful secret was a shadowy group.

"Duc de Aubenge " he said involuntarily before reason cut in. If it was Essodena's father come to see what had happened to her he wouldn't have bothered creeping around the castle at night. De Palfrey's hide would already be nailed to a door somewhere. He snatched another look. The interlopers, who ever they were, seemed to be painstakingly removing the brickwork he had so recently laid.

Beyond fear de Palfrey edged forward. They had to be stopped. A heavy candlestick stood just inside the door. The chanting was louder now and there was a force within it that was almost physical. And the screams had started again, urgent, wild, as if to warn the group of his presence. Then he noticed the wall. In spite of the fact that the men laboured at taking the stones away the wall appeared solid as the day he had put it up. And he could see it through bodies of the toilers. As he raised the candlestick to thrash out at the phantoms a light, more intense than lightening flared up. Blinded, de Palfrey instinctively hurled the candlestick in the direction of the ghastly wraiths. When he could see again the ghostly figures had stopped work and were staring in his direction. The chanting reached a crescendo and beat at him like a breaker on a beach.

Panic swept back. As he turned to run he became aware of another figure on his right. A stick-like, one eyed creature, an obvious denizen of some stygian nether-world. De Palfrey hesitated, unwilling to run the gauntlet of whatever this new menace might throw at him. He was still staring in fatal fascination when the eye erupted with white light which dealt him a blow that sent him reeling. Disorientated de Palfrey blundered away from the scourging light. As his foot trod space he remembered the seige well. Too late! He tried to throw himself sideways to evade the yawning black chasm waiting to suck him down. But there was nothing there to offer succour to the doomed man.

Essodena's screams stopped abruptly as de Palfrey's flailing body disappeared into the well. Before the water closed over his head de Palfrey heard the voice of his dead wife once more. Now, instead of screams there were peals of happy laughter underscoring the soaring choral chanting.

Canon Sean Thompson carefully packed his Bible in his briefcase and struggled out of his white surplice. The chanting which echoed and reverberated off the moist walls, stopped abruptly as his assistant Denis Warren switched off the tape recorder.

"They've broken through, Rev." Warren called and waited for Thompson to join him.

"Did you see that candlestick? Missed the bloody camera by a gnats foreskin." he claimed, excited by the phenomenon they had just witnessed. Thompson winced at the psychic photographers colourful vernacular and peered into the hole where the

other members of the Palfrey Preservation Society had broken through the dungeon wall. The cobwebbed skeleton seated in the remains of a chair, its yellow skull canted back in a silent scream, seemed to be looking at him, blaming him for not being there five centuries earlier. Warren smiled at the clergyman's distaste for the detritus of life. "I guess the old girl had something to scream about eh?" he asked with an edge of triumph in his voice.

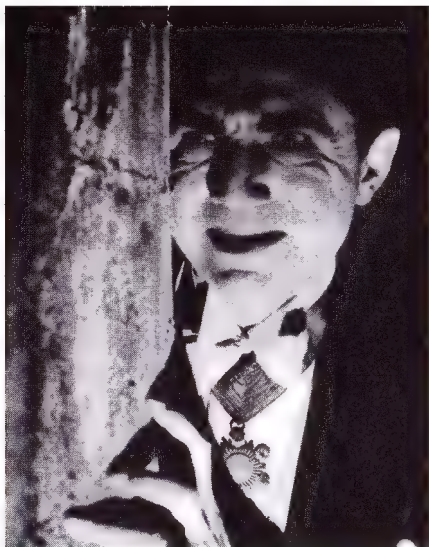
It had been Warren's insistence on an exorcism as well as a physical search of the dungeon that had convinced the Bishop that Thompson should do the bell, book and candle bit. After all, 500 years of reported screaming and poltergeist activity was worth a prayer or two. "Did you get anything on camera?" Thompson asked, curious in spite of the fact that he felt being involved in something as medieval as an exorcism did little for his image as new age go-for-it priest. "Don't know until I get the plates developed. Might have something on the recorder though. The dials went OTT just after we heard that sound in the well," Warren said and started to pack his equipment into holdalls. Thompson went as near as he dared to the side of the roped off seige well and tried to see down into the blackness. "I expect it was a rat or something" he opined. "Must have been a bleeding great rat," Warren said shortly. "Come on, I'll give you a lift back to town and we'll have a look at what we have got".

As they drove away from the castle, Count Roger de Palfrey stood on the battlements of his castle and tried to ignore the wild mocking laughter of his entombed wife which seemed to make the granite wall pulse and sway in derision. A man doomed for eternity by his evil deeds.

Vampire Portfolio No. 4



Christopher Lee as DRACULA about to have lunch



Bela Lugosi

Autograph collecting: Hobby or Investment

Autograph collecting has been, for many years, one of the most popular hobbies in the USA, but now Europe is quickly catching up. More and more people are taking up autograph collecting, not just as a hobby, but as a way of investing, in many cases, in something that increases in value quicker than almost any other commodity. I started collecting autographs almost 30 years ago and, in those days, most people thought that I was indulging in a 'childish' pastime. How time can prove you wrong! In the 1960's/70's, most famous people were pleased to answer requests for autographs and autographed photographs and, consequently, I was very fortunate to receive many great autographs, inscribed to myself.

the **REEL** *McCoy?*

These include such people as Neil Armstrong, Buzz Aldrin, John Wayne, Alfred Hitchcock, Frank Sinatra etc. and some, such as Vincent Price and Marlene Dietrich became almost pen-pals. Today, however, thousands of people write to the 'stars' every day and you can never guarantee getting an answer, or, if you do, that it is not secretarial. These, together with the other pitfall of the modern 'auto-pen', makes it very difficult hobby to follow. By far the best way of collecting an autograph is to collect them 'in person' and this is not always as difficult as it might seem. It does, however, take time and patience. Waiting outside stage doors, concert halls and hotels, in very often dreadful weather, can be miserable, but meeting your favourite star, getting their autograph and even having photographs taken with them, can make all of this worthwhile. But, even if you have the patience to do this, there are many autographs almost impossible to get in person - obviously so if the person is deceased. However, even these can be obtained through reputable companies that have erupted throughout the world, or through auctions, which are becoming more and more common. However, the rarer the piece is, the more valuable it becomes - the more valuable it becomes, the more people will want to buy it and keep it - therefore making it even more rare.... and so it goes on! Also, the more popular an artist, the more expensive the autograph. This is reflected in the massive jump in value of the 'Beatles' autographs when their new record was brought out last year.

Many people, after collecting for a while, decide to 'specialise', some in sports, literature, history, music and various categories of film, such as vintage, horror and sci-fi. There are even people 'in the business' who are collectors - I know at least one actor (of 'Drop The Dead Donkey' and 'Ballykissangel' fame) who is a very keen collector of comedy. 'Hammer Horror', 'Star Trek' and 'Star Wars' are other areas that are extremely collectable and the public often have the opportunity to get 'in person' autographs at various fairs and conferences held throughout the country. After saying all of this, Autograph Collecting can still be one of the least costly hobbies. All you need to start are postage stamps, stationery and a list of addresses, and these can often be found in the local library. Read the 'Who's Who', the 'International Who's Who', the 'Who's Who on Television' and the 'International Film Review' and you will find many contact addresses to write to.

It is important to remember that you have more chance of an answer if you send a reply envelope, either stamped or with International Reply Coupons. This, combined with some patience, can become a hobby that can also become an obsession.


Good Hunting!

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Robbins". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end.

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PICTURES OF INGRID

a gallery of photos of the
first lady of horror





Who's this? Jon Pertwee and Ingrid that's who!



Pitt & Pertwee from "The House That Dripped Blood"



Ingrid in scenes from 'The Wicker Man'



"Where's the soap?"



Two scenes from 'Countess Dracula'



As the old Countess (Ingrid Pitt), withered and pathetic in her last moments, watches as the hangman approach, she hears the villagers calling for revenge on... Countess Dracula



Ingrid with the peasant girl look!



*A Vamp draped on the mantelpiece from
'The House that Dripped Blood'!*



Looks like we've reached the tail-end of this magazine!



